

BOOK REVIEW

Review of Andrés SOLIMANO, *International Migration in the Age of Crisis and Globalisation. Historical and Recent Experiences*, Cambridge University Press, 2010. 223 pp.

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DOI: 10.1515/eras-2015-0010

Abstract

“International Migration in the Age of Crisis and Globalization. Historical and Recent Experiences” represents a work of major interest in the field of migration and globalization. Apparently two concepts that relate one to another, on a background of major population dynamics, the two notions are the two important pillars in what might perfectly be described as a complex analysis of migration, starting from the elements that have initiated it, and culminating with a fine comparison of positive and negative aspects of this phenomenon.

In the present paper, we acknowledge the vast “semantic” bound implied by the concept of migration. Apart from inherent aspects such as the importance of remittances, the unravelling of families or the frequently discussed brain-drain, we are presented an image of Latin America, a region dominated by contradictions, since it may well be considered as both destination region and net immigration labour force.

Keywords: migration, globalisation, remittances, families, brain-drain

Review of Andrés SOLIMANO, *International Migration in the Age of Crisis and Globalisation. Historical and Recent Experiences*.

In the field of sociology, as well as in other fields of expertise which imply social analysis, the description of phenomena and the elaboration of explications concerning the aspects which entail the mentioned phenomena can prove to be a difficult task. The difficulty could mostly reside in the researcher’s ability to analyze a certain concept by creating and referring to links between the respective phenomenon and other such existing phenomena.

For this purpose, the work of Mr. Solimano, *International Migration in the Age of Crisis and Globalisation. Historical and Recent Experiences* is worth mentioning. An author with undeniable expertise in migration and economy studies, Mr. Solimano brings to light a very interesting topic, that of the connection between international migration and globalization. Otherwise two subjects with common aspects such as economical disequilibria and wide cultural changes, both migration and globalization are elements of any contemporary society, elements which have been repeatedly analyzed. However, Mr. Solimano’s pertinent analysis concerning the relation between the two concepts, analysis which also entails a complex historical background, recommends his work as one of the landmark studies in the area of economy and migration.

The book focuses on two main approaches: the first approach is that of a debate between positive and negative aspects of migration in both source and destination countries. It is known that migration implies a dynamics between less and more developed countries, in terms of human and economic capital. However, at a closer look, there are far more aspects concerning

migration that have to be discussed.

As the author mentions, migration implies a clear difference between elite migration and the migration of ordinary, non-specialized labor force. In spite of the important quantitative difference between the two categories, the ratio of elites being significantly inferior to that of the ordinary labor force required in the area of production, the effects of elite migration are arguably superior.

To be more precise, as the author suggests, in the phase of elite migration, less developed countries are being deprived of important skillful contribution to the economic and medical service development. Hence, it can be observed that while the departure of labor force required for production might generate a severe lack of equilibrium in the area of social security, the lack of skills necessary in the process of national development represents a considerably more negative effect, as far as the source countries are concerned.

It is true that migration could comprise not only negative but also positive aspects. In this matter, the author argues that allowing human capital to leave the source countries might determine the dissipation of any state of unease. At the same time, it is mentioned that in such a context, governments might stop being forced to implement measures of prosperity. However, it remains to be seen whether the unraveling of families, the brain-drain or other such counterbalancing elements could maintain the positive view of migration until the end.

Another approach that can be found in Mr. Solimano's work is the description of the context in which the phenomenon called migration appeared and developed. Here, we can observe with ease that to a certain extent, migration appeared and developed in Europe and Latin America on the common background of globalization.

The four phases the author mentions, those of globalization, deglobalisation, "the Bretton Woods era" and that of the high exchange rates represent defining social and economical moments for South America and its "net immigration economies". That is because they describe key moments in the evolution of migration, moments which implied American and world exchange rates variation, besides making reference to Argentina's incredible status of both source and destination of migrant labor force. In this matter, the percentages of 38% poverty and 16.8% critical poverty characterizing Latin America, percentages mentioned by the author, might be considered as a very relevant element of the apparent status contradiction.

Undoubtedly, the issue of migration represented and shall continue to represent a complex topic of debate in the area of social sciences, a topic that shall be subject to further alterations. At the same time, migration is a topic that shall by no means be considered as taken for granted, given its complex nature. Under such circumstances, as it can be seen in Mr. Solimano's work, a multidimensional analysis of the phenomenon that should comprise a vast array of data is mandatory.